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The acquisition of the Dutch quantitative pronoun ER: the role of background language(s)

Sanne Berends  Petra Sleeman  Aafke Hulk  Jeannette Schaeffer

Introduction

This study looks at transfer from L1 French and L1 English to the L2 Dutch. We specifically look at the ability to judge and imitate morpho-syntactic and semantic structures with the quantitative pronoun ER.

The Dutch and French have a quantitative pronoun that accompanies a complex NP modified by a cardinal numeral or weak quantifier. The licensing conditions of these pronouns (Dutch: ER, French: EN) differ partially (e.g. Bennis, 1986; 1996). English does not have a quantitative pronoun.

Introduction

Materials

- Grammaticality Judgement Task
- 3 experimental conditions (N=30), 15 fillers
- Sentence Imitation Task
- 3 experimental conditions (N=12), 8 fillers
- Dutch Vocabulary Task, Digit Span, Questionnaire

Based on Full Transfer/Full Access, Schwartz & Sprouse (1994)

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Participants

L1 French (N=26), highly advanced, level > B2
L1 English (N=26), highly advanced, level > B2
L1 Dutch (N=26)

Average years of exposure: L1 French (22:1) L1 English (19:7)

Comparison results French-Dutch and English-Dutch

Linear models in R

In the SI the L1 English speakers behaved as we expected, however the L1 French speakers did not: apparently they behave just like the L1 English speakers.

In the GJT the L1 French seems to have an influence on L2 Dutch, like we expected, but a comparison between the L1 French and the L1 English speakers also shows that the L2 French speakers behave exactly the same as the L1 English speakers.

Comparison results French-English

In the GJT the L1 French and the L1 English on the L2 acquisition of the Dutch quantitative pronoun ER. However, we found that for the L1 French group Dutch is considered the ‘real L2’, and for the L1 French group English should be considered the L2 and Dutch the L3, thereby confirming the L2 Status Factor.

Discussion

Materials

- Grammaticality Judgement Task
- 3 experimental conditions (N=30), 15 fillers
- Sentence Imitation Task
- 3 experimental conditions (N=12), 8 fillers
- Dutch Vocabulary Task, Digit Span, Questionnaire

In the GJT the L1 French and the L1 English groups have been found in the GJT, thereby confirming the L2 Status Factor.

Conclusion

Our goal was to look at the role of L1 French and L1 English on the L2 acquisition of the Dutch quantitative pronoun ER. However, we found that for the L1 English group Dutch is considered the ‘real L2’, and for the L1 French group English should be considered the L2 and Dutch the L3, thereby confirming the L2 Status Factor.

References and Acknowledgements


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